

What about Service-Learning Matters? Using a Taxonomy to Identify Variables to Improve Research and Practice



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**IARSLCE WEBINAR
SEPTEMBER 30, 2015**



Goals for Webinar



- Why develop a Service Learning Taxonomy?
- Context -- IUPUI RISE Initiative
- Service learning course attributes
- Use by Faculty
- End of semester course census
- IUPUI Research Academy



Why Develop a Taxonomy?



- ❖ To support institutional assessment and research on high impact practices (HIPS)
- To inform and advance a research agenda for service learning by identifying those **variables** (*dimensions of the course design that may vary from low to high*) that may relate to student outcomes, specifically civic outcomes
- To develop a resource in working with faculty to support the fidelity/quality of service learning course design



RISE to the IUPUI Challenge Initiative



- RISE “recognizes” a long tradition and commitment to experiential learning courses outside the classroom walls.
- RISE “brands” IUPUI degrees as unique and in touch with “Employer Identified Skills” for new graduates (AAC&U-Hart Associates, 2015)



RISE High-Impact Practice Courses



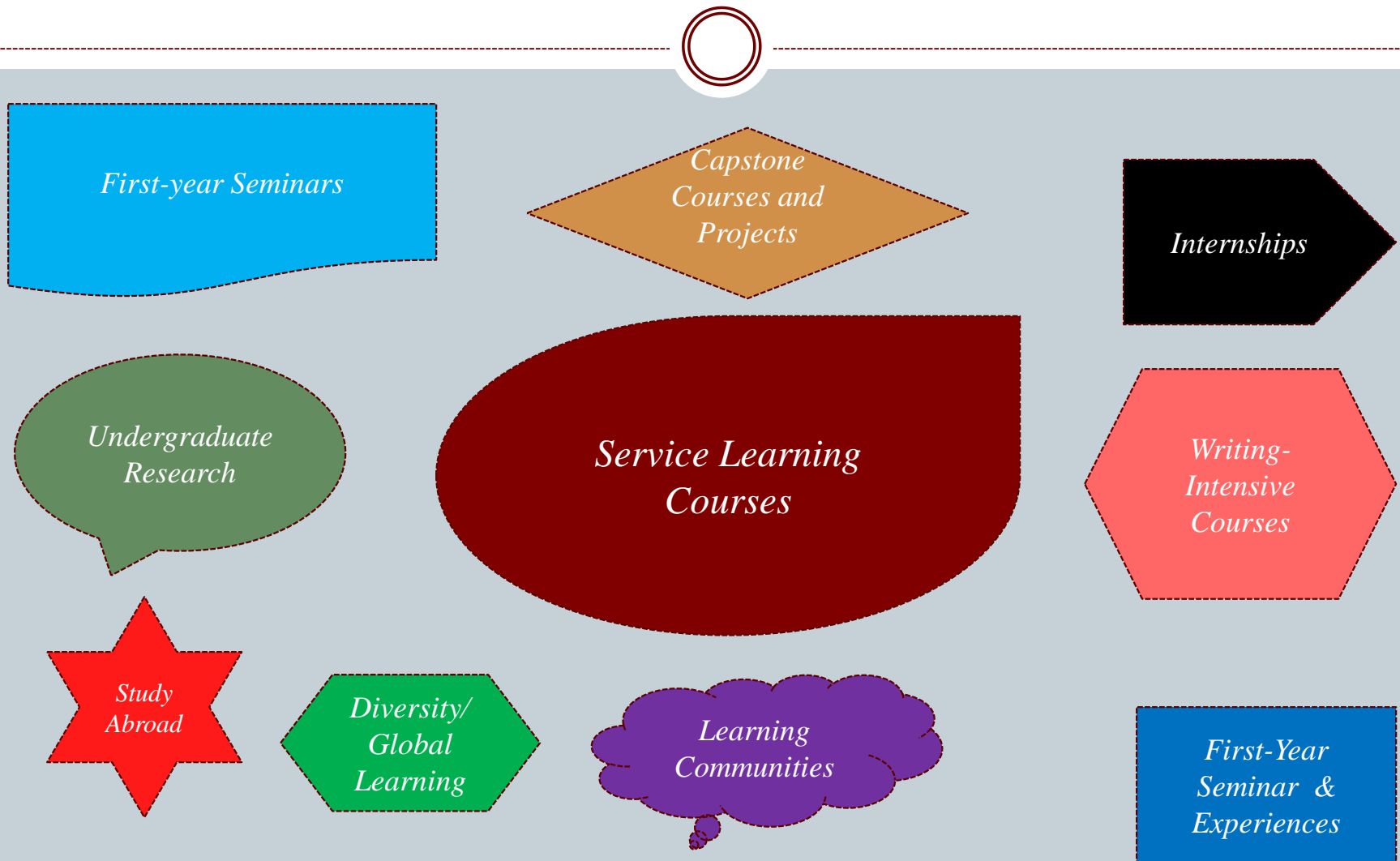
- **Research (CRL)**
 - Undergraduate, original, mentored
- **International study abroad (OIA)**
- **Service Learning (CSL)**
 - Various types and flavors
- **Experiential learning**
 - internships, practicum, clinical
 - largest bucket with no clear “home”

What Constitutes High Impact Practices?



- Intentional
- Connections/integrations
- Educationally purposeful activities
 - (in and out of class)
- Highly interactive
- Deeper approaches to learning
- Application
- Analyzing/synthesizing
- Reflection and analysis

Examples of High Impact Practices



HIP Program Fidelity



- Fidelity is defined by Webster as “the quality or state of being faithful, the accuracy in details, exactness.”
- Program fidelity assessment offers another level of detail about the program as implemented by examining the degree to which interventions are implemented as theoretically planned.
 - Poor fidelity example: SL course implemented with no structured reflection
- It is not possible to test the effectiveness of an intervention if the intervention failed to be implemented as planned
(Scott & Sechrest, 1989)

Definition of Service Learning

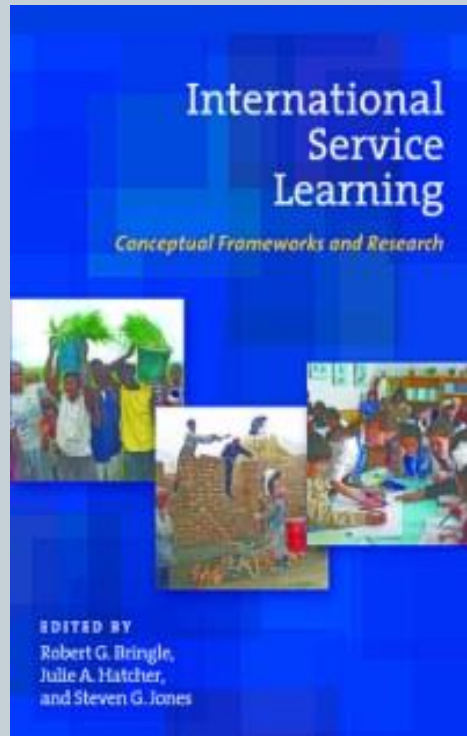


Service learning is defined as a "course-based, credit bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an **organized service activity** that meets identified community needs, and (b) **reflect on the service activity** in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility" (Bringle & Hatcher, 2009, p. 38).

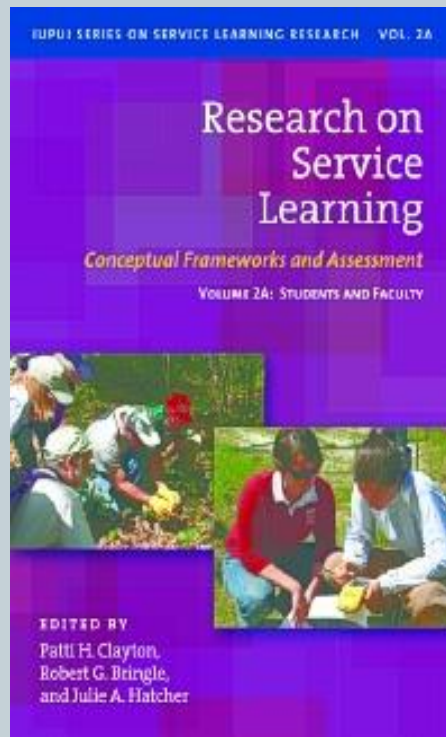
IUPUI Series on Service Learning Research



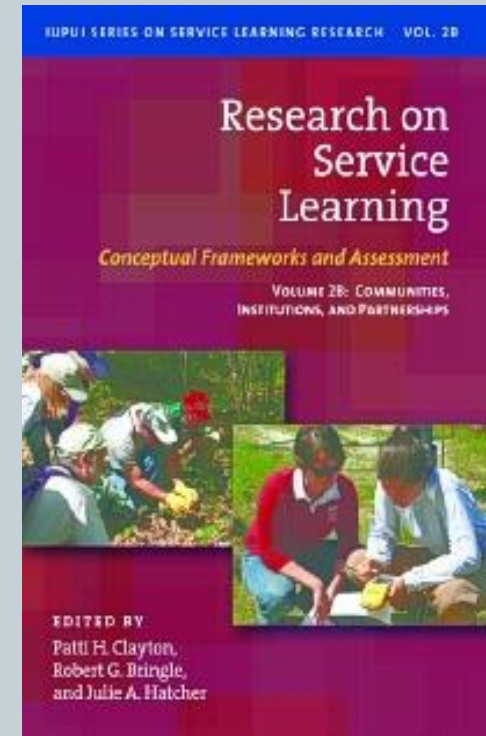
Volume 1



Volume 2A



Volume 2B



Critiques of SL Research



“One of the great weaknesses of the research in this field has been the **vague specification** of the experiences students actually have in their service learning classes” (Giles & Eyler, 2013, p. 55).

“Though there is strong evidence linking civic learning experiences with improved rates of retention and completion, greater evidence is needed on the ways in which **variations** in civic learning (i.e. forms of practice and levels of intensity) impact measures of student success” Finley, 2012, p. 3).

Special Qualities of SL as HIP



- Sense of being able to effect change in their community
- Increase in outcomes related to citizenship
- Positive cognitive and affective outcomes after graduation, e.g., frequency of socializing with diverse people, promotion of racial understanding, developing a meaningful philosophy of life, participating in community action programs (Finley, 2011; Assessment Institute, 2013)

- Predictor of five civic outcomes:
 - Critical consciousness and action
 - Social agency
 - Integration of learning
 - Civic engagement
 - Political engagement(Hurtado, Ruize, and Whang, 2012)

Service Learning “to what end”



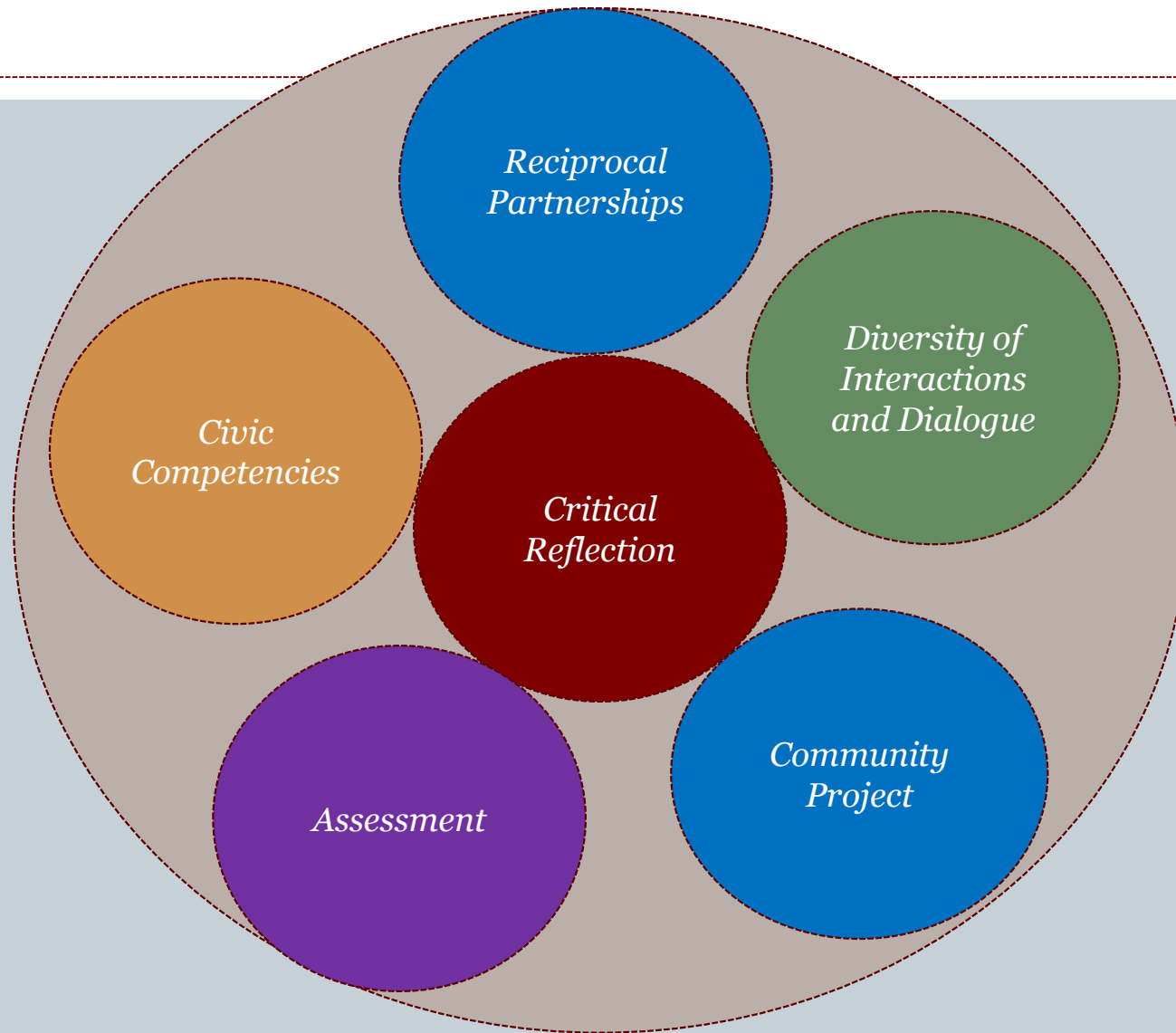
- Work of AAC&U, AASC&U, Kettering, Lumina, etc.
- Civic-Minded Graduate (Steinberg, Hatcher, & Bringle, 2011)
 - <http://csl.iupui.edu/teaching-research/opportunities/graduate.shtml>
- SL is only one of many strategies that can develop civic competencies

Process in Developing Taxonomy

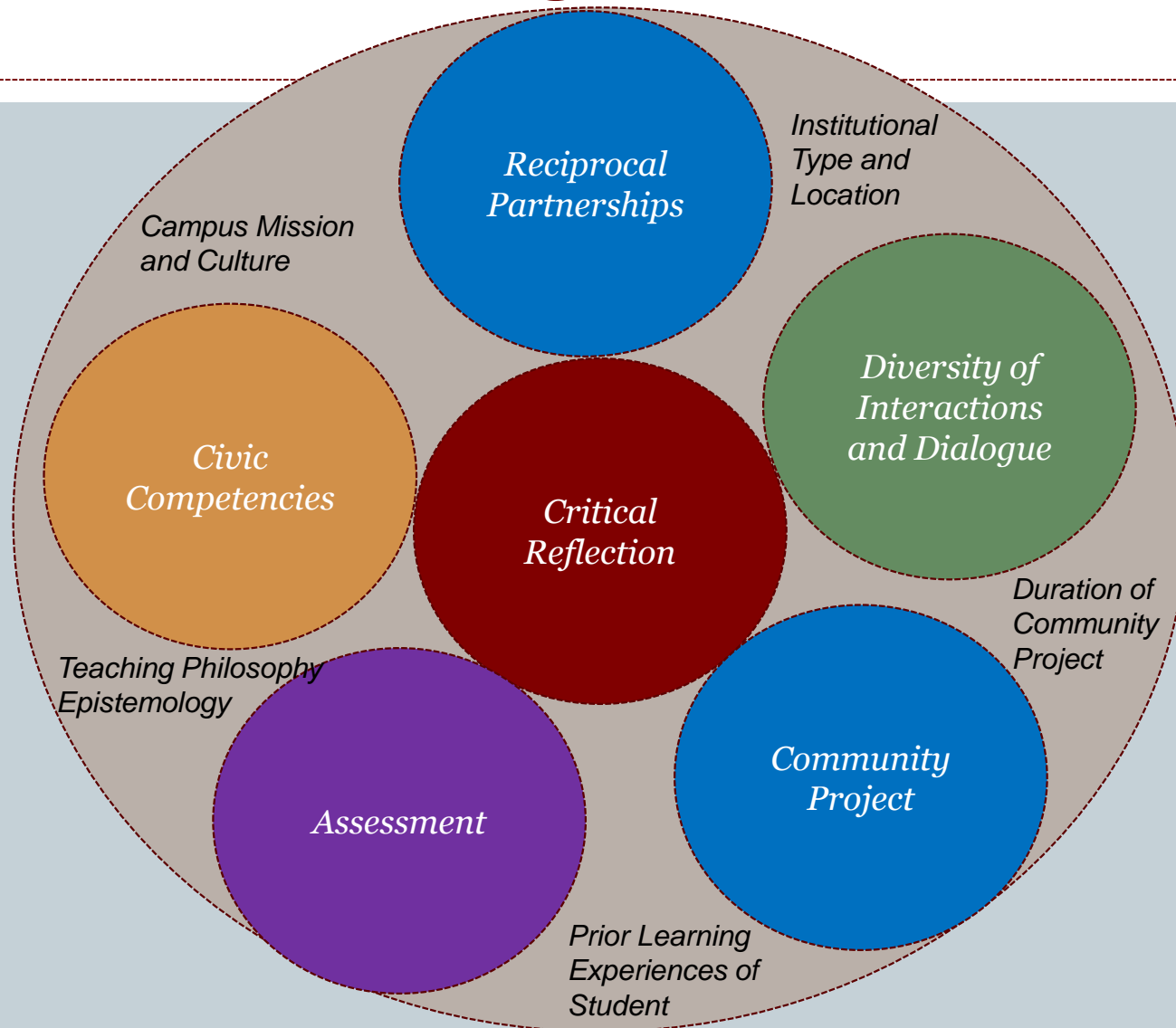


- Invited Ken O'Donnell as the keynote speaker at last year's *IUPUI Assessment Institute*
 - tracks on HIPS and civic engagement
 - Informed by California State Univ. system
- Deep dive into the literature (see sources)
- Met and deliberated four times with CSL colleagues
- Invited input from Senior Scholars
- Revise...rewrite...add domains...condense...Voila
- Inviting you to now provide feedback

Service Learning Course Attributes



Service Learning Course Attributes



Identifying Variables



- What is a variable?
 - An attribute that describes a person, place, thing, or idea. The value of the variable can vary from one entity to another
- Examples of variables in SL courses
 - Type of reflection activities
 - Degree of diversity of interaction
 - Degree of integration of discipline-based content with civic learning

IUPUI Adapting Approach used by CSU



	Low Intensity	Medium Intensity	High Intensity
High Impact Practice			

<http://www.calstate.edu/engage/taxonomies/index.shtml>

Reciprocal Partnerships



Attribute of SL Course	Low Intensity	Medium Intensity	High Intensity
1) Reciprocal partnerships and processes shape the community project and course design.	The instructor contacts a community organization to host students and provides a brief overview of the course (e.g., learning outcomes, syllabus) and the purposes of the community project.	The instructor meets with the community partner(s) to discuss the course (e.g., preparation/orientation of students, learning outcomes, syllabus), and to identify how the community project can enrich student learning and benefit the organization.	The instructor collaborates with and learns from the community partner(s) as co-educator in various aspects of course planning and design (e.g., learning outcomes, readings, preparation/orientation of students, reflection, assessment) and together they identify how the community project can enrich student learning and add to the capacity of the organization.

Community Project



Attribute of SL Course	Low Intensity	Medium Intensity	High Intensity
2) Community project enhances academic content and assignments.	The instructor includes a community project as an added component of the course but it is not integrated with academic content or assignments. The syllabus does not address the purposes of the community project.	The instructor utilizes the community project as a “text” to provide additional insight into student understanding of academic content and ability to complete assignments. The syllabus describes the relationship of the community project to learning outcomes.	The instructor integrates the community project and relevant social issue(s) as critical dimensions for student understanding of academic content and ability to complete assignments. The syllabus provides a strong rationale for the relationship of the community project to learning outcomes.

Diversity of Interactions



Attribute of SL Course	Low Intensity	Medium Intensity	High Intensity
3) Diversity of interactions and dialogue with others across difference.	The instructor offers students limited opportunities for interaction and dialogue with others across difference.	The instructor engages students in periodic interactions and dialogue with peers across a range of experiences and diverse perspectives.	The instructor and community partner(s) engage students in frequent interactions and dialogue with peers and community members across a range of experiences and diverse perspectives.

Civic Competencies



Attribute of SL Course	Low Intensity	Medium Intensity	High Intensity
4) Civic competencies (i.e., knowledge, skills, disposition, behavior) are well integrated into student learning.	The instructor focuses on discipline-based content with little attention/priority given to civic learning or development of civic competencies.	The instructor focuses on discipline-based content and connects to civic learning and civic competencies when relevant to the community project.	The instructor focuses on the integration of discipline-based content with civic learning and civic competencies and emphasizes the relevance of the community project to the public purposes of the discipline in society.

Critical Reflection



Attribute of SL Course	Low Intensity	Medium Intensity	High Intensity
5) Critical reflection is well integrated into student learning	The instructor asks students, on a limited basis, to create reflective products about the community project, usually at the end of the semester.	The instructor structures reflection activities and products about the community project that connect the experience to academic content, require moderate analysis, lead to new action, and provide ongoing feedback to the student throughout the semester.	The instructor builds student capacity to critically reflect and develop products that explore the relevance of the experience to academic content, use critical thinking to analyze social issues, recognize systems of power, lead to new action, and provide ongoing feedback to the student throughout the semester.

Assessment



Attribute of SL Course	Low Intensity	Medium Intensity	High Intensity
6) Assessment is used for course improvement	The instructor articulates student learning outcomes but no measurement tool is in place for assessment	The instructor articulates student learning outcomes and administers a measurement tool for assessment.	The instructor and community partner(s) articulate student learning outcomes and metrics for organizational capacity/ community outcomes and administers measurement tools for assessment.

Using in Faculty Consultations



- Prime the pump in course design
- Workshop topics
- Readings/resources
- What does it look like?
- Departmental understand when tagging an “S” course

Draft End of Semester Course Census ?s



1=Not at all

2=Low intensity

3=Medium intensity

4=High intensity

- 1) To what extent is your community partner involved in course planning?
- 2) To what extent does the course syllabus describe and connect the community project to course content and assignments?
- 3) To what extent does the course engage students in diverse interactions and dialogue with peers and community members across a range of experiences and perspectives?
- 4) To what extent are civic competencies integrated into student learning?
- 5) To what extent do you require students to critically reflect on their service learning course experiences?
- 6) To what extent is assessment used for improvement of course and community project?

How to give Feedback on Taxonomy



The Service Learning Taxonomy will be available for edit and comment at:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1p2Fuce6BsPzgXWecG9KqiQokl3xHUd0pt7pvA9M1LeI/edit?usp=sharing>

Google doc will be open until October 9, 2015.

8th Annual IUPUI Connecting Campuses with Communities



May 9-13, 2016, Indianapolis, IN

<http://csl.iupui.edu/about/conferences/connecting.shtml>

Service Learning Institute

Mon. May 9 – Wed. May 11th

Institute Objectives

- 1) To increase the number of high quality service learning courses*
- 2) To share promising practices and generate new ideas*
- 3) To enhance reflection, assessment, and partnerships in service learning classes*
- 4) To build a network of service learning practitioners*

Research Academy

Wed. May 11 – Fri. May 14

Academy Objectives

- 1) To strengthen research on service learning and community engagement courses*
- 2) To advance the scholarship of teaching and learning*
- 3) To provide consultation and feedback on research ideas*
- 4) To build a network of service learning scholars*